

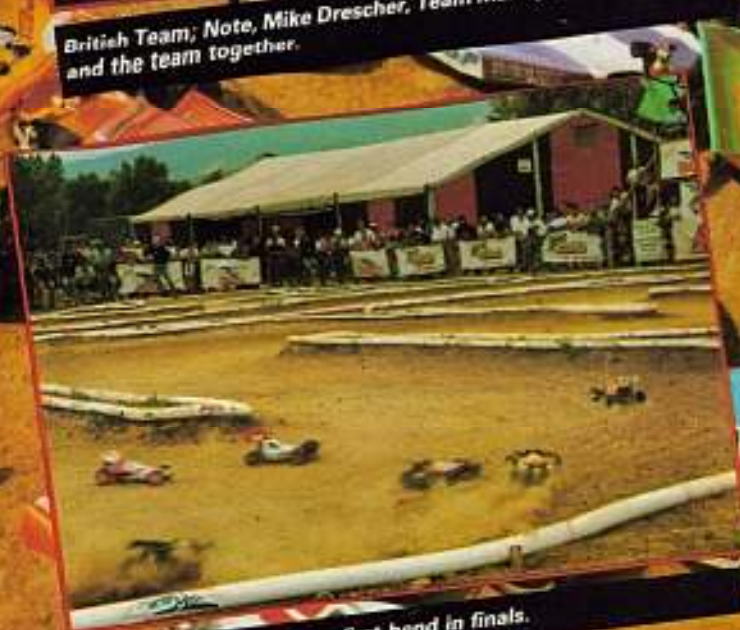
1988

1/10

EURO CHAMPS



British Team; Note, Mike Drescher, Team Manager holding himself and the team together.



Note dusty conditions on first bend in finals.



Some concourse entrants:-
Nearest, Steve West's CAT; Middle, Jason Green's CAT; Furthest, E. 'Dallas' Mathiesen's CAT (Sweden).



Winners and Runners Up:
Craig Drescher — 3rd; Denis Blandin — 1st; Jamie Booth — 2nd.
They received:
1. Bouquet; 2. Trophy; 3. Watch; 4. Medal; 5. Suspender Belt;
6. Champagne.

Es West reports on the Euro's from Genay in France.

Four years ago in Halifax, Yorkshire the first European Championships were

held. Since then, the venues have been Italy and last year Austria. This year the French were the hosts and the GT69 R/C Club, who have a track at Genay, near Lyon, were chosen by EFRA, the governing body, to stage the event.

Held over three days in June, the meeting attracted 120 of Europe's top buggy drivers who were there to vie for the prestigious title of the 1988 1/10 European Champion.

The venue was situated on an industrial



Dave Allen with his trophies finished 11th.



The 'A' Final line-up. Note: Track is rough on outside and smooth on inside. This gives an advantage to some buggies.

Craig looking pleased.



Right, the 'A' Final line-up with Mike Bridges 'posing' and Pete Stevens 'praying'.

Below, scratch built buggy called the Schmielberg (West Germany), raced and designed by Arne Schmielberg, built by Peter Man.



estate and included all the usual trackside facilities — a large marquee for pitting, a snack bar which was kept busy throughout the event quenching everyone's limitless thirst and appetite, a spares shop and a hospitality area from Drastic, who were the championships main sponsors. Although the setting itself was disappointing (we were spoiled by the beautiful lakeside meeting last year in Austria!), weather-wise, it couldn't have been better.

At first glance, the all-important track appeared to be a smooth, low-grip dirt track with a long straight, some sweeping bends and tight chicanes. On closer inspection this proved to be the case as it was baked hard on the racing lines and dusty elsewhere, with a couple of 'sleeping policemen' just to make things a little tougher. The straight was smooth on the inside but very bumpy off the racing line... this proved in due time to be a very significant factor during the finals. We all came to the conclusion that it would be very tricky to handle even with the correct setting up and the right combination of tyres.

A quick look around the pits revealed competitors from most of the European countries, with the largest teams coming from France, Germany, Italy and last but not least, Great Britain whose team of 26 represented possibly the strongest, with potential winners in the form of Jamie Booth, Pete Stevens, Rory Cull and many other up-and-coming young drivers.

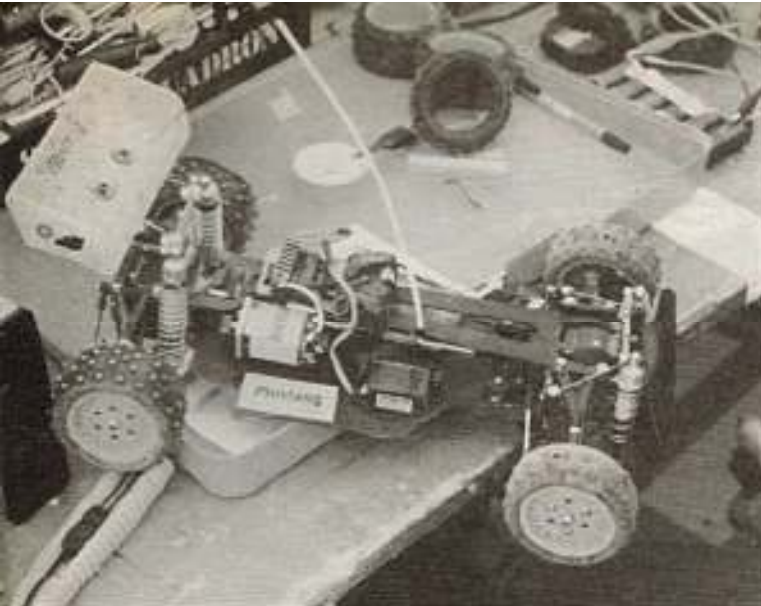
List of GB competitors:

Jamie Booth	Steve West
Chris Boakes	Tony Wells
Mike Bridges	Kevin Moore
Steve Haynes	Rory Cull
Jason Green	Nino Athanasiou
Jason Fowler	Jason Varley
Lawrence Harris	Phil Davis
Mark Ferguson	Peter Smith
Ian Oddie	Ian Little
Craig Drescher	Pete Stevens
Richard Isherwood	Darren Harris
Dave Allen	Keith Chaplin
Tim Walden	Kevin Blears

Several competitors had opted for the recently released Yokomo Dogfighter and after its impressive performance at this year's Reedy International at Romsey, it was obviously an interesting prospect on this similar surface. All the major makes of buggy were present with, as might be expected, the Cat predominant. All were 4WD and lined up as follows:

Schumacher Cat	47
Kyosho Mid Optimas	36
Yokomo YZ870C	11
TAG Coyote	6
Tamiya Avante	6
MRX	6
PB Maxima	4
Yankee	2
Scratchbuilt	2
	<hr/> 120





Italian Umberto Milanesi's modified Tag Pro 10.



La Pits.

Day 1 — Practice

Two hours of free practice preceded two rounds of controlled practice in heats on the first day and proved to be totally hectic. Pit boxes yawned and spat out all the relevant weird and wonderful gadgets designed (hopefully) to achieve mechanical perfection and the huge battle for grip was on, with drivers changing tyres and shock oil faster than I could blink.

It was thought that the new Yokomo Hot-lap tyres would be well suited to this track as they were very successful at the aforementioned Reedy International and different combinations of hard, soft and medium were seen on many buggies as everyone tried to attain grip. Several drivers who had raced on the track during the French Grand Prix, some weeks earlier, were trying cut down hard Cat spikes and in fact, Schumacher had brought enough tyres to challenge Goodyear! This proved to be the most popular set-up throughout the championships, although a new Farma tyre, which is similar to the Cat tyre but made of a harder material, was in demand. These, however, are not readily available.

Setting up a car holds the key to success on any track, but this is especially true on one where grip is negligible, so the free practice and the two heats of controlled practice in the heats format which followed were crucial to many competitors.

Qualifying

Each buggy was weighed and measured in the scrutineering tent and every transmitter was checked prior to the single qualifying round which completed the first days racing. A staggered start procedure was used to avoid usual first corner pile-ups and cars were released at two second intervals. This successfully prevented 'total carnage' but, to my mind, gave some advantage to leading cars which had something like 1/3 of a lap clear track in front of them at the beginning of every run.

The excellent A & B Lap-Counting System was used in conjunction with a large electronic scoreboard which enabled spectators to keep tabs on the leading 3 positions. A future 'must' for top class meetings in this country (BRCA please note) was the general opinion on this scoreboard facility which, as the meeting progressed and clear thinking gave way to emotional turmoil, became quite indispensable!

Le soleil continued to shine and the temperature inside the marquee rose to an oppressive 88°F and the hot dusty conditions meant that the air compressors on hand to clean the buggies were made good use of.

Excellent British performances in this first qualifying round came from Jamie Booth holding 1st place, Rory Cull, Phil 'I always hold the coach up' Davies, Chris Boakes and Nino, although the pitfalls of

this difficult track had loomed ominously large to many drivers, hopefully lessons had been learned — and tomorrow was another day!

Day 2 — 3 Qualifying Rounds

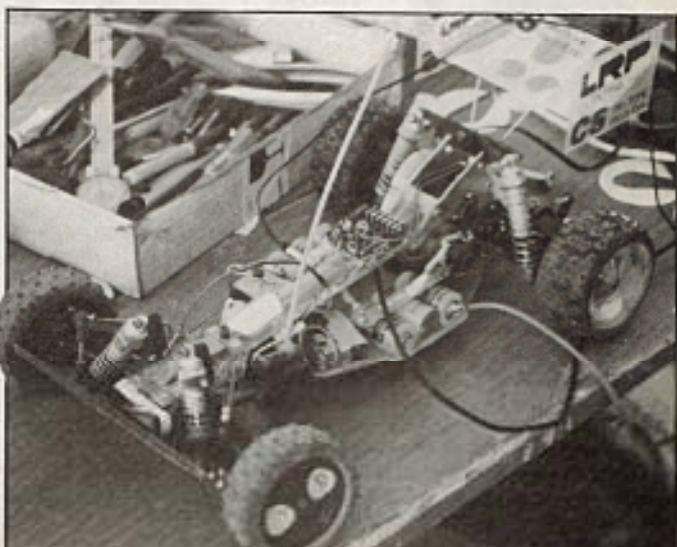
The second day dawned, cloudy but still very warm and the pits were filled once more with hopeful anticipation... with three chances to get things right!

Three rounds of qualifying heats were run and tension mounted throughout the day. Frenchman Denis Blandin moved up into 2nd place and young Craig Drescher to 5th during round two. Thankfully, the track showed little sign of deteriorating and Mike Bridges came into the reckoning along with his MGN team mate Steve Haynes.

The first significant problem arose when the announcer changed. This caused considerable confusion, which affected quite a number of finishing times, as some did not know whether they'd finished or not! To make matters worse, penalties were imposed on anyone inadvertently passing the start line after he had officially finished.

In the last round of qualifying, a final superior effort by Blandin pinched the TQ position from Jamie, with Mike Bridges and Stephan Oberle of West Germany 3rd

Below left, Jamie receiving his trophy, etc. Below right, West German's Stephen Oberle's Schumacher CAT team member races for LRP Motors. Note: Small nicad pack near aerial to drive servo for steering. This is supposed to increase duration by 10-20 secs. Possible another lap?





Sweden's E 'Dallas' Mathlesen's Schumacher CAT and himself can't understand why it didn't win concourse.

and 4th respectively. These four were in the enviable position of going straight into the A final.

As always, lighter moments broke the seriousness of the day and brought a welcome titter — forgive the pun — like the mum, who for modesty's sake shall remain nameless (she'll never forgive me for this!) and whom, rumour has it, was never so glad for the aid of a couple of ty-wraps!

Day 3 — Finals

On arrival at the track on finals day, we were dismayed to discover that one of the West German drivers Stephan Danz had lost all his racing gear with the exception of his buggy — it had all been stolen from his car on the previous night! Although he was able to race the finals on borrowed tackle, this was obviously a great blow to the 6th place qualifier of the previous day.

The finals promised to be very exciting, as the 'Xmas Tree' system was used. For those not familiar with this, let me briefly explain. All drivers, with the exception of the first 4 automatic A final qualifiers, must race out their respective finals and aim to finish in the first three. These 3 then move up and race in the next higher final. Thus the first 3 to finish in the 1/16 finals, which are the first of the day, move up to compete in the 1/8 finals and so on right up the 'tree'. In this way it is possible to clinch one of the remaining six places in the A final... providing you have a mountain of charged cells at your disposal!

We anticipated some great racing and we weren't disappointed!

Unlike the qualifiers, the start for the finals was on the far side of the track — half-way down the main straight. Cars on the inside had the advantage of a smooth surface, but those starting in the rough, stony outside lane were obviously less well off! First bend pile-ups were seen to be inevitable and protests were raised. These were overruled and racing went ahead, but the start, as expected, became an all important factor in the finals.

Despite this, some great racing was witnessed. Notably, Tony Wells, who started in the 1/32 final, reached the 1/4 finals only to fall victim to a disintegrated integrator; and Jason Varley who had successfully conquered two finals to comfortable lead the 1/8 before a broken brush spring put paid to his day. If only...?

As the finals continued, the start became more and more the deciding factor. This was apparent in the three A final runs which followed, where it became crucial to make it round the first two bends.

Shortly before the main finals were run, a Concourse D'Elegance was held to find the 'Buggy Beautiful'! The most outrageously outrageous, perfectly painted or, in any event, terrifically turned out car on the day. After much deliberation the eventual winner, an Italian Cat, was chosen, but rumour has it that Mike Dreschers shorts came within a whisker or should I say 'whisper' — heard plenty — of taking the trophy!

A Finals

The first A Final produced a scrappy start with Blandin leading round the first bend. He was never caught. Rory Cull secured 2nd place with an impressive run and Jamie, after pushing too hard on the final lap, relinquished 3rd place to Pete Stevens and slipped to 4th. Blandin had landed the first 13 lapper of the championships.

In the 2nd A final, Jamie led the field from the start with Mike Bridges in close pursuit. Blandin came through the field to challenge the leaders and forced 2nd place to threaten Jamie's lead, pushing Mike into 3rd place, where he eventually finished. The Brits outthanked the French with deafening shouts of 'Jamie, Jamie' and cheered him to victory in as exciting a race as you could wish to see. Jamie had replied with a thirteen lap win — but Blandin in 2nd place also had 13 laps.

So, in the third final, Jamie had it all to do. The atmosphere was 'charged' with excitement — nothing to do with cells, you understand — as anticipation mingled with the whiff of pommes frites (French fries to you!) and everyone waited... Not only did Jamie have to beat Blandin to win, he had to do it with a 13 lapper. Sadly, it was not to be. Unlucky tangle, on the 2nd bend at the start shattered Jamie's dreams for this year and silenced the entire British contingent. To beat Blandin now was virtually impossible. But no one would want to take the glory of this race away from young Craig Drescher, who led from start to finish in an impeccable run which was to clinch him



Some British Team members in the pits, note Jason Varley in 'Tears'.

the No. 3 spot on the winners rostrum. This victory for Craig was a fitting end to his magnificent efforts over the 3 days in Genay.

Pete Stevens clinched 2nd place with Mike Bridges 3rd. Jamie finished back in 6th after a vain attempt to pull out at the stops on a surface which quite simply would not allow it.

And so it was a French victory, with a well-deserved win by Denis Blandin. The British proved, however, that they are the main force in Europe with many young drivers climbing the Xmas tree to new heights. This contributed greatly to a magnificently exciting day for us, with ten out of the final top 20 positions held by Brits.

Final Top 20 Positions

1	Denis Blandin	11	Dave Allen	GB	
2	Jamie Booth	GB	12	Kevin Moore	GB
3	Craig Drescher	GB	13	Phil Davies	GB
4	Pete Stevens	GB	14	S. Kubler	
5	Mike Bridges	GB	15	S. Metz	
6	Rory Cull	GB	16	S. Solaroli	
7	Stephen Oberle		17	J. Roosa	
8	Klaus Wilheim		18	Steve West	GB
9	Steve Haynes	GB	19	O. Garss	
10	W. Bergbauer		20	F. Veyssiere	

Finally, our congratulations go to the organisers. No expense was spared to make it an extremely enjoyable 3 days which culminated in a memorable presentation complete with National anthems and wine, medals and French silk suspender belts for most competitors — perfectly appropriate... VIVE La FRANCE!

Driver	Country	Car	Motor	Radio	Tyre F	Tyre R	Gear Ratio	Speed Cest's	Cells	Qual Pos	Final Pos
Denis Blandin	F	Kyosho Mid LW Optima	Reedy Pink	Sanwa Exord	Kyosho Blocks	CAT	16/74	Noak TX	Salt VY	1	1
Jamie Booth	GB	CAT XL	Reedy 180	JR Apex	CAT	CAT	32/118		Schumacher 1700 SCE	2	2
Craig Drescher	GB	CAT XL	Reedy Red 170	Sanwa Exord	Parma CAT	Parma CAT	32/129	Sanwa Vortex	Laser Special	5	3
Pete Stevens	GB	Kyosho Mid 4 Opt	Twister 170 Wat	Kyosho	CAT	CAT	18/74	Laser	Laser SCE	6	4
Mike Bridges	GB	CAT XL	MG 180	Futaba 2LX	CAT	CAT	25/118	Noram Eliminator	Noram SCR	3	5
Rory Cull	GB	CAT XL	Reedy Red 170	JR Apex	CAT	CAT	32/120	Demon Pro-King	Schumacher 1700 SCE	7	6
Stephen Oberle	W Germany	CAT XL	LRP Orange	MPX	CAT	CAT	26/120	CS Rascal	CS SCR	4	7
Klaus Wilheim	W Germany	Kyosho Mid Opt LW	Reedy Gold	MPX	Kyosho	TAG	21/74	CS Rascal	Kal SCR	8	8
Steve Haynes	GB	CAT XL	MG 140	Futaba 2LX	CAT	CAT	22/122	Noram Eliminator	Noram SCR	15	9
Werner Bergbauer	W Germany	Yokomo	Reedy Pink	MPX	CAT	TAG	17/81	Flash	Demon SCE	8	10